



State of Connecticut
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONN. 06106

**Testimony in Support of:
House Bill Number 5086
Appropriations Committee
Friday, March 4, 2016**

Chairmen Bye and Walker, Ranking Members Kane and Ziobron, and Members of the Appropriations Committee: For the record, my name is Representative Jesse MacLachlan, and I would like to thank the Committee for raising **House Bill Number 5086, An Act Concerning The Constitutional Spending Cap**. The House Republican Caucus stands in strong support of this legislation.

As you know, in December of this past year, the legislature adopted a process for creating definitions to implement the constitutional spending cap. Our caucus has concerns with the process as it was approved in the Deficit Mitigation Plan, as well as the way the process is currently being carried out.

If the legislature was truly serious about implementing the constitutional cap, it should not take a year for the Spending Cap Commission to propose definitions, which is what the law currently requires. Both Republican caucuses submitted a proposal to accelerate the work of the Spending Cap Commission, and, respectfully, we request that the Appropriations Committee change the deadline for the Commission to produce definitions sooner than the December 1st date in the current law. In our proposal, we also included provisions to encourage timely adoption of definitions: 1) a 10% cut in legislators' salaries, 2) suspension of transportation allowance, and 3) no funding for unsolicited mailings. So, if definitions are not adopted by the General Assembly by October 1st, these three consequences would go into effect.

Perhaps more troubling is the lack of any action by the Spending Cap Commission to date. By law, the Commission was required to hold its first meeting a week ago today. That hasn't happened yet. This is just another example of the lack of commitment to creating a real, enforceable spending cap in Connecticut.

The legislature has had 24 years to adopt the spending cap, and we are concerned that the current process gives no assurance that the cap will ever be adopted. We hope that you will strongly consider our recommendations and pass a bill that will finally help to control state spending, especially during these times when we are facing multi-billion deficits.

Once again, thank you for raising this bill and for considering our testimony.